



# OESNEWS

*Governor's Office of Emergency Services*

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **OES Director Urges Californians to Prepare their Family Emergency Communication Plans**

SACRAMENTO – Natural and man-made disasters can strike at any time. The Director of the Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES), Henry Renteria, today urged Californians to develop a family communication plan to use in emergencies.

"No one can predict where their families will be when the next big earthquake rattles California or whether their loved ones will be with them," said Renteria. "Your spouse may be at work and your children away at school or on their way home. That's why it is so important to prepare a family emergency communication plan. Everyone will know whom to call for help and how to safely reunite with each other."

Renteria's remarks come in conjunction with efforts by OES and other agencies involved in the state's "Get Ready!" emergency preparedness campaign to encourage Californians to focus on at least one aspect of preparedness each month.

A family emergency communication plan has two functions: It provides contact information for local emergency providers, and it establishes a plan to reunite loved ones if a catastrophic event separates family members.

Written plans should include the following:

- Call 911 in an emergency
- Name and phone number of family doctor or medical facility
- Poison Control Center: 1-800-222-1222
- Number for local Office of Emergency Services
- Number for local Red Cross ([www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org))
- Names of all household members
- Your address and phone number
- Name and phone number of your designated out-of-town contact
- Family meeting place outside of the neighborhood

Renteria stressed the importance of having an out-of-town contact and a pre-identified place where family members can re-unite if they are separated.

"Because local phone lines may be down or clogged with calls immediately after a major disaster, it may be difficult to learn the locations and conditions of family members by calling people in the immediate area," he noted. "Including an out-of-town contact and a pre-identified place to meet in your emergency plan will provide peace of mind."

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The OES Director also recommended that every family member be involved in putting together the plan.

“Having your whole family participate provides a sense of ownership and builds confidence in the plan. I strongly urge parents to include their children in efforts to develop and test the plan,” he said.

Renteria also recommended that families post the plan on their refrigerator or another prominent place in the household for quick reference. Each family member should also carry the phone numbers listed on the plan with them at all times.

“For those with school-aged children or relatives in care-home facilities, another important step in developing your family communication plan is learning about what the emergency plans are for those facilities,” Renteria added. “Ask the school or care-home where they will evacuate in case of an emergency, and make sure that they have your up-to-date contact information.”

Additional information on emergency preparedness is available on the OES Get Ready Campaign Web site at [www.oes.ca.gov](http://www.oes.ca.gov).

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